



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Monday, January 29, 2007

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Census Data Now Available for State Legislative Districts

(HELENA) – Montana State Legislators now have a new resource for information on their legislative districts. Today the Montana Department of Commerce's Census and Economic Information Center (CEIC) unveiled a new web page featuring Demographic Profiles for each of the 50 Senate Districts and 100 House Districts. The economic and demographic data are available thanks in part to the first phase of the 2010 Census planning.

"Demographic Profiles will be a valuable tool for Montana's elected officials," Governor Brian Schweitzer said. "This specific information will help policy makers analyze potential impacts on their constituents and allow them to provide assistance to areas that need it most. This will help in everything from energy policy and economic development, to wildlife and resource management."

These Demographic Profiles consist of 2000 Census data, retabulated by the U.S. Census Bureau and released in early January. Each Profile reflects the current House and Senate District boundaries provided to the Census Bureau by the Montana Legislative Services Division staff in the fall of 2006.

The Profiles include demographic, housing, social and economic statistics and will provide Legislators with practical, localized information for the constituents they represent. More specific information such as age, race, gender, household relationship, place of birth, education, employment status, income, and family is presented district by district.

Department of Commerce Director Anthony Preite says the Profiles are a tool to help streamline operations in state government. "This is a great resource for public policy research and analysis. The Profiles will help legislators and state agencies quickly access essential information, and determine how bills and policy decisions might affect a specific district and regions in the state."

Susan Byorth Fox, Executive Director of the Montana Legislative Services Division, agrees. “In the way that we have been able to use county and city data, it can now be applied to the legislative districts. It can help with health, public assistance, business and income policy and virtually any census data can be used to describe the people that live in any House or Senate district.”

Also available on CEIC’s web site are Geographic Comparison Tables (GCT) which allow users to compare data district by district for such characteristics as housing, age, race, educational attainment, and income, to name a few. To access the Profiles and the GCT tables, visit CEIC’s State Legislative District web page at <http://ceic.mt.gov/stateLegDist.asp>.

The full data sets for each district (over 200 tables from the 100% file, or approximately 800 tables from the sample file) are available through the U.S. Census Bureau’s American FactFinder (AFF) web site.

With this release by the U.S. Census Bureau, Phase 1 of the 2010 Census Redistricting Data Program is completed. Phase 2, Voting District/Block Boundary/Block Boundary Suggestion Project begins later this year.

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